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C O N F I D E N T I A L RIGA 000061

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/23/2012
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [LG](#)
SUBJECT: HELPING LATVIA DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY
FOR AFGHANISTAN

REF: A) STATE 7434 B) RIGA 55 C) RIGA 56

Classified By: Ambassador Catherine Todd Bailey. Reason: 1.4 (D)

11. (U) This is an action request. See para 4.

12. (C) Ref A requests a full court press for Allied contributions to Afghanistan in advance of the January 26 ministerial. We are concerned that providing the Latvians a laundry list of initiatives where they might help will simply overwhelm them and not result in an effective contribution to the mission. As reported ref b, the Latvian government is developing a comprehensive strategy for Afghanistan. It will be drafted by the MOD, although the responsible officer is an MFA employee on detail. We believe that the GOL would benefit from a short (two - three day) mentoring session from a USG official who could help the Latvians develop a true comprehensive strategy for Afghanistan that fully surveys the Latvian interagency community to see what capabilities are available and learn how to match those with needs on the ground in Afghanistan.

13. (C) We have previewed this idea with both MFA and MOD officials and it was warmly received. As noted ref c, Latvia is still trying to find its place as a member of the EU and NATO and is often not sure how to bring contributions to the table beyond simply sending troops. Providing them assistance in developing this plan for the most pressing need, Afghanistan, will help them develop the institutional capability to do similar projects in future.

14. (U) Action request: Embassy requests that Washington agencies identify an appropriate person who could be sent to Latvia for a period of two - three full working days to assist GOL officials in developing a comprehensive strategy for Afghanistan. The person should have both strong substantive knowledge of the situation in Afghanistan as well as experience at interagency policy development.
BAILEY